



Retention Solutions

Community Oriented Policing Services

www.usdoj.gov/cops/

Reports from the Field

While the following examples describe a variety of approaches to the COPS retention requirement, the COPS Office does not endorse any particular strategy. To ensure the success of your retention efforts, thoroughly research relevant state and local laws, budgetary, and other policy considerations early in your planning process.

Making Criminals Pay

The police department in San Fernando, Calif. (population 23,500) has come full circle in its community policing efforts.



Chief Dominick Rivetti
San Fernando, Calif.

In the late 1980s, we participated in several Federal narcotics task forces. This initiative allowed the department to share in the assets seized from criminal activity. Chief Dominick Rivetti implemented a strate-

gy to utilize asset seizure funds in long-term investments so that the community would benefit for many years.

Chief Rivetti's concept was to invest the funds into interest-bearing accounts which would allow the department to hire additional police officers down the road. This creative strategy had a unique twist: proceeds from illegal activity would fund more police officers in the future.

In 1995, we received COPS FAST funding for new officers. Asset seizure fund interest helped us provide the local matching funds for the COPS grants.

When our grants expire, the interest is projected to be enough to fully fund the retention of the added positions. Chief Rivetti takes special pride in paying for officers with money that otherwise would still be in the hands of criminals. Since 1995, community policing efforts involving these new officers, plus a strong partnership between the community and San Fernando Police, are resulting in a decrease in overall crime by 21 percent. *Contact: Lieutenant Robert Ordelheide, Division Commander, San Fernando Police Department, (818) 898-1258.*

Planning + Communication = Retention

In Greensboro, N.C. (population 205,000), our police department hired 11 officers under a COPS AHEAD grant. These new officers, together with an additional existing position, were equally distributed among our four field districts.

The new officers were designated as Community Resources Officers and assigned to existing Community Policing Coordinators. From the start, they have strengthened our community policing, enhanced communication between citizens and police, and created a stronger partnership to address community and crime problems.



Chief Robert C. White
Greensboro, N.C.

When we began the grant process, the department worked closely with the mayor and city council to ensure retention planning for these officers. Throughout the grant, we kept city officials apprised of both the ongoing success of these new community policing officers – as well as their overwhelming popularity in Greensboro's neighborhoods.

Solid planning and constant communication have made the difference. The city council recently approved retention funding of these additional officers following the grant's expiration. The final vote was unanimous. *Contact Captain W. D. Watterson, Greensboro Police Department, (336)373-2350.*

Day One in Fresno

In Fresno, Calif. (population 406,000), our police department and city officials have planned from the beginning to keep our COPS-funded officers. Thanks to our strategic budget planning, the first 12 of these positions are already completely paid for by the city's general fund.



Chief Ed Winchester
Fresno Police
Department

In 1997, we hired 80 UHP officers. Looking forward, we realized that it would be easiest to assume local funding for these officers if we hired them in four smaller cohorts. This allowed for a more gradual change in the size of our sworn complement, as well as easing the "growing pains" for our budget to absorb 80 additional locally-funded officers at the end of three years.

Our city's senior budget analyst addressed the COPS officer retention issue before our department accepted federal funding. The city carefully invested portions of its pension funds, and used the subsequent profit to decrease its annual contribution to that fund. The money saved from pension contributions will be applied to expenses like officer salaries.

Having made public safety a priority, officials believe that the general fund will cover the remaining jobs as well, without any significant cuts to any other departments. *Contact: Chief Ed Winchester, Fresno Police Department, (209) 498-1201.*

A Collective Approach to Retention

The Village of Frankfort, N.Y. (population 3,000), has received funding for one COPS FAST officer. During the planning stages of the COPS FAST application, our agency fully anticipated hiring and retaining the new officer. During several meetings with our village Board of Trustees, the police department presented various plans to ensure that we met with the important retention requirements of the COPS Office.



While many agencies are addressing retention by placing more money in a budget line, we decided to take a two-pronged approach. First, to assure that the position is added and maintained within the department, the Village and its police bargaining unit (Frankfort PBA) executed a new contract through the year 2002, adding the position permanently to the agency's strength. Second, funding is specified in the department's operating budget.

The COPS FAST grant intensified the Village of Frankfort's commitment to the principles of community oriented policing. Our agency has dramatically reshaped our institutional mindset. Officers spend significantly more time out of the station, and out of their patrol cars. We use three bicycles for community oriented policing patrols that enjoy a positive reception throughout the entire community.

Without the seed money first provided by the COPS Office, the Village of Frankfort would never have been able to hire a new officer or expand community policing. *Contact: Chief James M. Palumbo, Jr., Village of Frankfort, (315) 895-7566.*